CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Syllabus

Cambridge International AS & A Level Music 9483

Use this syllabus for exams in 2027 and 2028.
Exams are available in the June and November series.

Version 2

For the purposes of screen readers, any mention in this document of Cambridge IGCSE refers to Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education.

Cambridge Pathway

Why choose Cambridge?

We work with schools worldwide to build an education that shapes knowledge, understanding and skills. Together, we give learners the confidence they need to thrive and make a positive impact in a changing world.

As part of the University of Cambridge, we offer a globally trusted and flexible framework for education from age 3 to 19, informed by research, experience, and listening to educators.

With recognised qualifications, high-quality resources, comprehensive support and valuable insights, we help schools prepare every student for the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Qualifications that are recognised and valued worldwide

From the world's top-ranked universities to local higher education institutions, Cambridge qualifications open doors to a world of opportunities.

Setting a global standard

With over 160 years of experience in delivering fair, valid and reliable assessments to students worldwide, we offer a global, recognised performance standard for international education.

Your path, your way

Schools can adapt our curriculum, high-quality teaching and learning resources and flexible assessments to their local context. Our aligned offer helps Cambridge schools support every learner to reach their potential and thrive.

Learning with lasting impact

Cambridge learners build subject knowledge and conceptual understanding, and develop a broad range of skills, learning habits and attributes to help make them ready for the world.

Improving learning outcomes through data-led insight and action

Our trusted baseline and diagnostic assessments, together with our insights and evaluation service, help schools turn data into knowledge and actionable insights, to inform teaching decisions and improve learner outcomes.

Bringing together a community of experts

We bring together the collective knowledge of experts and our diverse community of educators worldwide, supporting them to learn from one another and share ideas and information.

Tackling the climate crisis together

We believe that education is key to tackling the climate crisis. Together with Cambridge schools, we can empower young people with the skills and knowledge to take action on climate change, helping them be ready for the world.

School feedback: 'We think the Cambridge curriculum is superb preparation for university.'

Feedback from: Christoph Guttentag, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Duke University, USA

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Important: Changes to this syllabus

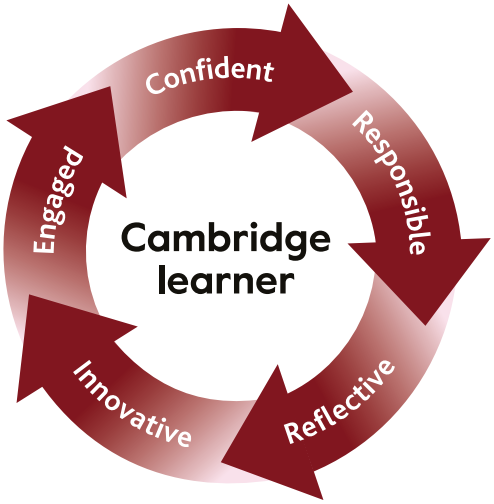
For information about changes to this syllabus for 2027 and 2028, go to page 61.

The latest syllabus is version 2, published September 2025. There are no significant changes which affect teaching.

1 Why choose this syllabus?

Key benefits

The best motivation for a student is a real passion for the subject they are learning. Cambridge International AS & A Level give schools flexibility to offer a broad and balanced curriculum with a choice of over 50 subjects. Students can select the subjects they love and that they are best at, enabling them to reach their potential and thrive.



Following a Cambridge International AS & A Level programme helps students develop abilities which universities value highly, including:

- a deep subject knowledge
- conceptual understanding and higher-level thinking skills
- presenting ordered and coherent arguments
- independent learning and research.

Cambridge International AS & A Level Music provides provides opportunities for learners to develop and improve their musical skills in a wide range of music styles and traditions. It allows learners to explore and build on their interests. The syllabus encourages independent expression and the development of a critical, reflective practice. It is designed to accommodate a range of music and resources, and the different skills and interests of teachers.

Our approach in Cambridge International AS & A Level Music supports the development of learners who are:

confident, developing musical skills and understanding and communicating confidently

responsible, understanding and appreciating musical and cultural frameworks

reflective, developing through analysis and evaluation the process and outcome of their listening, composing and performing

innovative, experimenting with ideas and processes to create, recreate and reframe music

engaged, enriching their work by engaging with the world of musicians and with their own musicianship and intellectual development.

School feedback: 'Cambridge students develop a deep understanding of subjects and independent thinking skills.'

Feedback from: Principal, Rockledge High School, USA

Key concepts

Key concepts are essential ideas that help students develop a deep understanding of their subject and make links between different aspects. Key concepts may open up new ways of thinking about, understanding or interpreting the important things to be learned.

Good teaching and learning will incorporate and reinforce a subject's key concepts to help students gain:

- a greater depth as well as breadth of subject knowledge
- confidence, especially in applying knowledge and skills in new situations
- the vocabulary to discuss their subject conceptually and show how different aspects link together
- a level of mastery of their subject to help them enter higher education.

Carefully introducing and developing key concepts at the right time will help to underpin the teaching. You may identify additional key concepts which will also enrich teaching and learning.

The key concepts for Cambridge International AS & A Level Music are:

- **Rhythm**
  Rhythm is the organisation of time in music. This may be free, flexible or more measured or metrical.
- **Melody/Line**
  Melody/line is the horizontal shape in music. It is important to understand the way melody/line works in contour, phrase structure and motivic analysis. An awareness of melody/line also helps in appreciating large-scale thematic relationships.
- **Harmony**
  Harmony is the vertical relationship in music. Harmony is an essential tool. It shapes and directs the music. Harmonic relationships may include consonance and dissonance, key relationships, and the idea of tonality in music.
- **Form**
  Form is the formal architecture of music, both small- and large-scale. An appreciation of form leads to understanding the shape of musical structures and the musician's use of materials over a larger span of time. It is a navigational tool – form provides signposts for musical events.
- **Texture and timbre**
  Texture – how different lines or parts relate to one another, and timbre – how instruments/voices combine at times in special or characteristic ways, provide significant and meaningful ways to understand music. Texture and timbre relate to elements of instrumentation, ensemble, thickness or clarity, orchestration and sound colour.
- **Tension and resolution**
  Tension and resolution provide direction (the 'pull' of the music), whether through melodic intensity, harmonic function, intensity of dynamics or formal shape. Musical enjoyment or value arises in relation to musical tension and resolution.
- **Continuity and change**
  Continuity and change is central to music. Nearly every aspect of music has been subject to change over time, sometimes gradual and sometimes abrupt. Sensitivity to this feature provides an essential means to understand and interpret a work.

Qualifications that are recognised and valued worldwide

Cambridge qualifications prepare and equip learners with the skills they need to thrive at university and beyond. The world's best higher education institutions recognise our qualifications and value the critical thinking skills, independent research abilities and deep subject knowledge that Cambridge learners bring.

We continually work with universities and colleges in every part of the world to ensure that they understand and accept our qualifications. More than 2220 universities in over 90 countries formally recognise Cambridge qualifications, with many more accepting our qualifications on application.

UK ENIC, the national agency in the UK for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills, has carried out an independent benchmarking study of Cambridge International AS & A Level and found it to be comparable to the standard of AS & A Level in the UK. This means students can be confident that their Cambridge International AS & A Level qualifications are accepted as equivalent, grade for grade, to UK AS & A Levels by leading universities worldwide.

A choice of assessment routes

Cambridge International AS & A Level offers a choice of assessment routes with staged assessment available in many subjects: Cambridge International AS Level can be offered as a standalone qualification or as part of a progression to Cambridge International A Level.

Cambridge International AS Level Music makes up the first half of the Cambridge International A Level course in music and provides a foundation for the study of music at Cambridge International A Level. The AS Level can also be delivered as a standalone qualification. Depending on local university entrance requirements, students may be able to use it to progress directly to university courses in music or some other subjects. It is also suitable as part of a course of general education.

Cambridge International A Level Music provides a foundation for the study of music or related courses in higher education. Equally it is suitable as part of a course of general education.

For more information about the relationship between the Cambridge International AS Level and Cambridge International A Level see the 'Assessment overview' section of the Syllabus overview.

Visit **www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition-search/** and university websites for the most up-to-date higher education entry requirements.

Learn more: **www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition**

Supporting teachers

We believe education works best when teaching and learning are closely aligned to the curriculum, resources and assessment. Our high-quality teaching support helps to maximise teaching time and enables teachers to engage learners of all backgrounds and abilities.

We aim to provide the following support for each Cambridge qualification:

- Syllabus
- Specimen question papers and mark schemes
- Specimen paper answers
- Schemes of Work
- Example candidate responses
- Past papers and mark schemes
- Principal examiner reports for teachers

These resources are available on the School Support Hub at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/support**, our secure online site for Cambridge teachers. Your exams officer can provide you with a login.

Additional teaching & learning resources are also available for many syllabuses and vary according to the nature of the subject and the structure of the assessment of each syllabus. These can include ready-built lesson materials, digital resources and multimedia for the classroom and homework, guidance on assessment and much more. Beyond the resources available on the Schools Support Hub, a wide range of endorsed textbooks and associated teaching and learning support are available from Cambridge at **www.cambridge.org/education** and from other publishers. Resources vary according to the nature of the subject and the structure of the assessment of each syllabus.

You can also contact our global Cambridge community or talk to a senior examiner on our discussion forums.

Sign up for email notifications about changes to syllabuses, including new and revised products and services, at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/syllabusupdates**

Professional development

Find the next step on your professional development journey:

- **Introduction courses** – An introduction to Cambridge programmes and qualifications. For teachers who are new to Cambridge programmes or new to a specific syllabus.
- **Focus on Teaching courses** – These are for teachers who want to explore a specific area of teaching and learning within a syllabus or programme.
- **Focus on Assessment courses** – These are for teachers who want to understand the assessment of a syllabus in greater depth.
- **Marking workshops** – These workshops help you become more familiar with what examiners are looking for, and provide an opportunity to raise questions and share your experiences of the syllabus.
- **Enrichment Professional Development** – Transform your approach to teaching with our Enrichment workshops. Each workshop focuses on a specific area of teaching and learning practice.
- **Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications (PDQs)** – Practice-based programmes that transform professional learning for practicing teachers. Available at Certificate and Diploma level.

For more information visit **www.cambridgeinternational.org/support-for-teachers**

Supporting exams officers

We provide comprehensive support and guidance for all Cambridge exams officers.
Find out more at: **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

2 Syllabus overview

Aims

The aims describe the purposes of a course based on this syllabus.

The aims are to enable students to:

- develop appreciation of music, through listening, composing and performing
- develop aural appreciation of a variety of Western and non-Western music styles, genres and traditions
- encourage an informed critical response to music
- develop creative and interpretative skills through composing and performing in Western and/or non-Western traditions
- deepen understanding of music in its wider cultural context
- communicate understanding confidently, supporting judgements with evidence-based argument
- develop the skills and understanding needed for the study of music in higher education and/or lifelong learning.

We are an education organisation and politically neutral. The contents of this syllabus, examination papers and associated materials do not endorse any political view. We endeavour to treat all aspects of the exam process neutrally.

Content overview

Cambridge International AS & A Level Music encourages learners to study a variety of music and build on their individual interests. Learners develop the ability to make connections between the musical activities of listening, composing and performing and the variety of music around the world. Teachers have the flexibility to structure the Cambridge AS & A Level Music syllabus so that the course supports and develops learners' musical experience, interests and abilities.

While following a course based on this syllabus it is important for learners to be supported in learning to listen, compose and perform with greater understanding and purpose. These skills are important for musicians, and will help to equip candidates to study music at a higher level and/or to enjoy music as lifelong learners, including as educated listeners.

At AS Level, learners focus on listening, composing and performing. For listening, they study set works. These are chosen to support learners in developing their listening skills and understanding of music, including compositional techniques and performance practice. They learn to work with Western notation. Learners also listen to and explore other music of their choice and identify and learn to communicate connections across a wide variety of music. Learners are also encouraged to build on their own personal musical interests as they study composing and performing. Through this, they learn to develop their own range of compositions and performance programme.

At A Level, learners have the opportunity to build on their AS Level studies. They choose two areas of interest from composing, performing and investigating music. Learners have the opportunity to develop their musical knowledge, skills and understanding and to communicate these through music and academic writing of more depth.

Throughout the course, learners are encouraged to analyse and evaluate and to present work which is underpinned by practical and theoretical understanding. By learning to listen attentively and with purpose, to create and perform, and present understanding of music through academic writing, learners are developing transferable skills. These will help equip them for higher education or employment.

School feedback: 'Cambridge International AS & A Levels prepare students well for university because they've learnt to go into a subject in considerable depth. There's that ability to really understand the depth and richness and the detail of a subject. It's a wonderful preparation for what they are going to face at university.'

Feedback from: US Higher Education Advisory Council

Assessment overview

All candidates take:

Paper 1

Listening 2 hours
100 marks

There are three sections in the Listening paper:

A: Compositional Techniques and Performance Practice

B: Understanding Music

C: Connecting Music

Externally assessed

60% of the AS Level

30% of the A Level

and:

Component 2

Practical Music Coursework
100 marks

There are two compulsory elements: performing and composing.

Candidates must complete:

– 6–10 minute performance

– two contrasting compositions, 1–2 minutes each

Internally assessed and externally moderated

40% of the AS Level

20% of the A Level

A Level candidates take two of either:

Component 3

Extended Performance Coursework
100 marks

There are two parts to Extended Performance:

– 15–20 minute performance

– 1000–1500-word research report

Externally assessed

25% of the A Level

or:

Component 4

Extended Composition Coursework
100 marks

There are two parts to Extended Composition:

– 6–8 minute composition

– 1000–1500-word research report

Externally assessed

25% of the A Level

or:

Component 5

Investigating Music Coursework
100 marks

There are two parts to Investigating Music:

– 2500–3000-word essay

– up to 500-word reflective statement

Externally assessed

25% of the A Level

Information on availability is in the **Before you start** section.

Check the samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples** for submission information, forms and deadlines for Components 2, 3, 4 and 5.

There are three routes for Cambridge International AS & A Level Music:

	Route	Paper 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Component 5
				A Level candidates take **two** components from 3, 4 and 5		
1	**AS Level only** (Candidates take all AS components in the same exam series)	yes	yes			
2	**A Level** (staged over two years) Year 1 AS Level*	yes	yes			
	Year 2 Complete the A Level			yes	yes	yes
3	**A Level** (Candidates take all components in the same exam series)	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes

* Candidates carry forward their AS Level marks subject to the rules and time limits described in the *Cambridge Handbook*. See **Making entries** for more information about carrying forward marks.

Candidates following an AS Level route are eligible for grades a–e. Candidates following an A Level route are eligible for grades A*–E.

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

AO1 Listening

Listen attentively and responsively, and communicate knowledge, understanding and musical insight.

AO2 Performing

Perform with technical, stylistic, interpretative and expressive control, and communicative awareness.

AO3 Composing

Compose with technical, stylistic, musical and expressive control, and communicative awareness.

AO4 Critical reflection

Make connections and reasoned judgements in listening, performing, composing, and critically reflect on these.

Weighting for assessment objectives

The approximate weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives (AOs) are summarised below.

Assessment objectives as a percentage of the qualification

Assessment objective	**Weighting in AS Level %**
	Paper 1 and Component 2
AO1 Listening	51
AO2 Performing	24
AO3 Composing	16
AO4 Critical reflection	9
Total	100

Assessment objective	**Weighting in AS Level %**	**Weighting in A Level %**		
	Paper 1 and Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Component 5
AO1 Listening	25	0	0	40
AO2 Performing	12	40	0	0
AO3 Composing	8	0	40	0
AO4 Critical reflection	5	10	10	10
Total	50	50	50	50

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

Assessment objective	**Weighting in components %**				
	Paper 1	**Component 2**	**Component 3**	**Component 4**	**Component 5**
AO1 Listening	85	0	0	0	80
AO2 Performing	0	60	80	0	0
AO3 Composing	0	40	0	80	0
AO4 Critical reflection	15	0	20	20	20
Total	100	100	100	100	100

3 Subject content

This syllabus gives you the flexibility to design a course that will interest, challenge and engage your learners. Where appropriate you are responsible for selecting music, resources and examples to support your learners' study. These should be appropriate for the learners' age, cultural background and learning context as well as complying with your school policies and local legal requirements.

This section sets out the knowledge and skills that learners will need to develop during the course.

Preparing for the Listening paper

Candidates develop skills through studying a combination of set works and music of free choice. The set works are from the Western classical tradition and include music from the baroque era onwards. Candidates also study a wide range of music, including folk, jazz, pop and world music.

This paper focuses on candidates learning to listen to music with increasing insight. They will need to develop musical and contextual understanding, aural perception, and musical literacy, as well as an ability to respond personally to music in their own words. In developing their skills, candidates are encouraged to study a broad range of music from different eras, contexts and traditions.

To do this, candidates will need to develop their skills of aural perception. Aural perception is the ability to listen to familiar and unprepared music and be able to identify significant features. It is also the ability to discern the similarities and differences between two works or two performances of the same work. This is related to an understanding of musical devices. Candidates will need to understand how these devices are used musically and historically.

Candidates will need to support these skills of aural perception with general musicianship and musical literacy, including how music is represented in notation. Candidates should be supported in making links between sound and notation.

By encouraging these listening skills, candidates should be able to compose and perform with greater understanding and purpose.

Section A

Set Works (2027–2028):

George Frederic Handel	Organ Concerto in F major, HWV 295*, The Cuckoo & the Nightingale*
Georg Philipp Telemann	Ouverture-Suite in G minor, TWV 55:g4

Section B

Set Works (2027–2028): The natural world

Ludwig van Beethoven	Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68, Pastoral
Maurice Ravel	*Histoires naturelles,* M. 50 *Le paon, Le grillon, Le Cygne,* *Le martin-pêcheur*
Tōru Takemitsu	*Tori wa hoshigata no niwa ni oriru (A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden)*

Musical features

The following list of musical features provides some indication of the range of knowledge expected in the Listening paper. Where the term 'including' is used, everything listed must be studied. However, this list is not exhaustive and other related aspects should also be studied.

In addition, candidates should be encouraged to gain confidence in recognising and, where appropriate, working with these musical features in their other components.

Style

- Western classical, including:
  - baroque
  - classical
  - romantic
  - twentieth century, including:
    - impressionism
    - neo-classicism
    - minimalism
  - twenty-first century
- jazz
- folk
- pop
- world

Ensembles and instruments/voices

The instruments and voices used in the following:

- Western, including:
  - choirs
  - orchestras
  - jazz bands
  - chamber music
- world, as appropriate to the traditions chosen for study
- folk, as appropriate to the traditions chosen for study
- pop, as appropriate to the traditions chosen for study
- keyboard instruments, including:
  - piano
  - harpsichord
  - organ

Genre

- symphony
- concerto grosso, including:
  - concertino
  - ripieno/tutti
  - basso continuo
- concerto
- string quartet
- sonata
- march
- waltz
- minuet and trio
- scherzo
- suite, including:
  - French overture
  - prelude
  - allemande
  - corrente/courante
  - sarabande
  - gigue
  - minuet
  - gavotte
  - bourrée
- madrigal
- motet
- lied

- oratorio, including:
  - recitative
  - aria and chorus
- opera
- overture
- interlude
- musical

Rudiments

- Western standard staff notation, including:
  - tempo, dynamic and expression markings (in Italian, French and German, as appropriate)
- clefs (treble, alto, tenor and bass)
- key signatures (major and minor keys up to six sharps and flats)
- intervals (major, minor, and perfect)
- time signatures
- ornaments, including:
  - trill
  - mordent
  - turn
- articulation signs, including:
  - legato
  - staccato
  - marcato
  - mezzo-staccato
  - staccatissimo

Melody and rhythm

- scales, including:
  - major
  - minor
  - chromatic
  - whole-tone
  - pentatonic
- melodic movement (ascending, descending, by step, leap, sequence)
- phrasing
- call and response
- metre (duple, triple, quadruple, irregular metre)
- syncopation
- swing
- polyrhythm
- baroque pitch

Harmony

- chord function:
  - primary chords (I, IV, and V(7)) and inversions
  - secondary chords (II and VI) and inversions
- harmonic sequence, including:
  - circle of 5ths
- cadences (perfect, plagal, imperfect and interrupted)
- modulations to related keys, including:
  - sub-dominant
  - dominant
  - relative minor
  - relative major
- suspensions
- diatonic/chromatic

Instrumental and/or vocal effects

- arco
- pizzicato
- glissando
- tremolo
- double and triple stopping
- strumming
- pitch bending
- mute
- flutter tonguing
- roll
- melisma

Structure

- binary
- ternary
- rondo
- theme and variations
- ground bass
- ritornello
- episode
- cadenza
- improvisation

Compositional techniques

- repetition
- imitation
- sequence
- canon
- ostinato
- drone
- Alberti bass
- pedal (tonic and dominant)
- contrary motion

Texture and timbre

- melody and accompaniment
- monophonic
- homophonic
- heterophonic
- polyphonic
- contrapuntal
- imitation
- canon
- fugue
- parallel motion

Preparing for Practical Music

This is a skills-based component. There is no set content. Teachers and candidates have the flexibility to structure this component to support candidates' musical experience, interests and abilities and to work within their available resources.

The focus of this component is on candidates learning to develop the practical skills of performing and composing. Candidates should be encouraged to develop creative, technical and interpretative skills, and be able to present contrasting pieces in both performing and composing.

Candidates should be encouraged to develop their sense of discovery and creative approach to performing and composing. They will need to develop understanding of the relevance of their own cultural environment(s) and be willing to explore, and be informed by, environments of other eras and traditions. They should be encouraged to be creative in interpretative performance and inventive in developing compositional ideas. Candidates are expected to develop detail and accuracy in their presentation of performing and composing, both musical and written.

As developing musicians, it is also important that candidates are supported in learning to develop consistent practice habits and skills and techniques in composing and performing. They should also be encouraged to reflect on their work in music, including the artistic process. This includes for example, the role of style, craftsmanship, expressive communication, authenticity and integrity.

Preparing for Extended Performance, Extended Composition and Investigating Music

Candidates choose two from Components 3, 4 and 5. The focus of the second year of study is on candidates learning to develop and apply their skills at a higher level of musicianship. Candidates do this through choosing two from extended studies in performance, composition and investigating music.

As candidates build on their areas of interest, they will need to learn to support their studies with written work that documents the range of research and contextual exploration. These skills will support candidates' development in technical, stylistic and expressive skills (performing, composing and investigating music). Candidates will need to learn to integrate contextual investigation with practical outcomes in their chosen extended studies: performance, compositions, investigation essay.

Preparing for Extended Performance

This is a skills-based component. There is no set content. Teachers and candidates have the flexibility to structure this component to support candidates' musical experience, interests and abilities and to work within their available resources.

Candidates should be encouraged to develop the musicianship required in performance through increasingly focused listening, contextual understanding and musical literacy. Their work needs to be both technically competent and show personal responsiveness. The interpretation of music, whether notated or otherwise, is a significant aspect of the study of music. Extended Performance can help students develop an increased understanding of the skills of composition and investigating music.

Candidates who choose Extended Performance will need to demonstrate the ability to:

- prepare and research for the performance by selecting and evaluating appropriate sources
- make connections between research elements and practical outcomes, displaying appropriate aural awareness
- perform with fluency and confidence
- perform with technical control across a range of technical skills
- perform with accuracy in their interpretation of the technical and expressive aspects of music notation
- perform with contextual understanding of performance conventions within the chosen performing focus
- express independent thinking and reflection.

Preparing for Extended Composition

This is a skills-based component. There is no set content. Teachers and candidates have the flexibility to structure this component to support candidates' musical experience, interests and abilities and to work within their available resources.

Candidates should be encouraged to develop the musicianship required in composition through increasingly focused listening, contextual understanding and musical literacy. Their work needs to be both technically competent and show personal responsiveness. Extended composition can help students develop an increased understanding of the skills of performance and investigating music.

The Extended Composition skills required are closely related to one another and combine together to form the whole.

Candidates who choose Extended Composition will need to demonstrate the ability to:

prepare and shape ideas

- engage in initial research
- integrate selected musical techniques and devices from their listening with a sense of autonomy in their own composing
- formulate a detailed composing concept
- shape distinctive materials – these may be ideas formed from the basic elements of pitch, rhythm and textures
- choose and use harmonic language in a coherent and convincing way
- balance and pace musical events through control and informed judgement
- develop a secure structural musical framework to meet the demands of an extended composition.

develop the work

- combine ideas; refine, develop and extend ideas; connect ideas effectively
- judge the effective use of continuity and contrast or gradual change or unfolding
- build effective larger-scale structures over an extended musical timescale.

use medium and texture

- use sound sources with attention to potential technical and expressive range
- use a variety of possible musical figurations and textures using sound sources alone and in combination
- use medium-specific skill, for example setting text in the use of voice or technology skills for composing in an electro-acoustic medium.

reflect and communicate

- prepare and research for the composition by selecting and evaluating appropriate sources
- make connections between research elements and practical outcomes, displaying appropriate aural awareness
- use music technology or instruments/voices to record the composition, with a focus on expressive communication
- communicate the composing intention using appropriate notation and/or written explanation as appropriate to the chosen tradition or write a detailed written account of the process of composition
- express independent thinking and reflection.

Preparing for Investigating Music

This is a skills-based component. There is no set content. Teachers and candidates have the flexibility to structure this component to support candidates' musical experience, interests and abilities and to work within their available resources.

Candidates should be encouraged to develop the academic musicianship required in investigating music through increasingly focused listening, contextual understanding and musical literacy. Their work needs to be both academically sound and show personal responsiveness. Investigating music can help students develop an increased understanding of the skills of performance and composition.

Candidates should be supported in choosing a topic which is of particular interest to them and which will enable them to develop skills in research and critical thinking. Candidates should be encouraged to choose carefully the pieces of music they investigate. They also need to be made aware of those they may not choose. (Refer to section 4.)

The Investigating Music skills required are closely related to one another and combine together to form the whole.

Candidates who choose Investigating Music will need to demonstrate the ability to:

- prepare and research for the investigation by selecting and evaluating appropriate sources and forming an overview of significant knowledge
- make connections between research elements and practical outcomes, displaying appropriate aural awareness
- apply knowledge and understanding of music, including musical features, to their listening
- express understanding of contexts, for example historical
- analyse musical features, including comparatively
- use appropriate notation
- use clear and coherent written communication skills, following the conventions of academic writing, including:
  - correct terminology
  - supporting arguments with musical examples
  - referencing
- develop the skills and understanding for an effective investigation
- express independent thinking and reflection.

Faculty feedback: 'Understanding how and why our climate is changing and providing the knowledge and skills to explore the challenges plays a key role in every student's education.'

Feedback from: Dr Amy Munro-Faure, Head of Education and Student Engagement of Cambridge Zero

4 Details of the assessment

Paper 1 Listening

Written paper, 2 hours

100 marks

60 per cent (AS Level), 30 per cent (A Level)

This paper has three sections. Candidates must answer questions from all three sections, and must answer five questions in total. Candidates are advised to plan their time carefully. They may answer the questions in any order.

Section A: Compositional Techniques and Performance Practice

A total of 35 marks is available for Section A. Candidates should spend no more than 45 minutes on this section.

In this section there are three compulsory questions. Section A consists of a range of short- and long-answer questions focusing on compositional techniques and performance practice, increasing in length and difficulty. These questions will require knowledge of the set works.

Section B: Understanding Music

A total of 35 marks is available for Section B. Candidates should spend no more than 45 minutes on this section.

In this section there are two questions. Candidates must choose **one** question. These questions will focus on musical understanding, including compositional techniques and their effects, in the set works.

Section C: Connecting Music

A total of 30 marks is available for Section C. Candidates should spend no more than 30 minutes on this section.

In this section there are three questions. Candidates must choose **one** question. These questions will require a wider knowledge of musical genres and styles from **other than** the set works.

Recordings

In Section A, all candidates will be provided with an audio recording containing the extracts of music to be used in Section A. Playback facilities must be available for each candidate, and they may listen to the extracts as many times as they wish.

In Section B, all candidates must bring an audio recording of the set works into the exam room. The recordings must be complete, unedited and contain no text. No particular recordings are specified.

In Section C, no recordings may be used.

Scores

Candidates are not allowed to bring scores into the exam room.

A full score will be provided for Section A in an insert.

Any notes that candidates make on the full score will not be credited. All answers must be written in the answer booklet. The study and use of notation is important; candidates should be able to locate and recognise significant features through a combination of listening and reading.

Section A: Compositional Techniques and Performance Practice (35 marks)

This section will test aural perception, music literacy and applied contextual understanding in relation to familiar and unprepared works from the baroque era. Candidates will be required to apply their knowledge from the familiar set works to unprepared music.

Set Works (2027–2028):

George Frederic Handel	Organ Concerto in F major, HWV 295, *The Cuckoo & the Nightingale*
Georg Philipp Telemann	Ouverture-Suite in G minor, TWV 55:g4

No particular recordings or editions of scores are specified. It is recommended that candidates listen to more than one recording/interpretation of both set works.

In Question 1, candidates will listen to an audio recording of an extract from one of the set works and answer several short questions.

In Question 2, candidates will listen to an audio recording and read a score to answer several questions, some of which will require more extended answers. The music will be unprepared.

In Question 3, candidates will listen to an audio recording of two performances of the same unprepared work used in Question 2. Candidates answer two questions, both of which require extended answers. The questions will be about performance practice and will ask candidates to evaluate and compare.

For Section A, candidates will require understanding of the typical forms of the baroque period, and the terms most commonly used in describing these. Some questions in Section A may involve a commentary on matters such as texture, instrumentation, phrase structure, form or style.

In Questions 2 and 3, candidates will need to apply their knowledge and understanding of the set works (familiar music) to unprepared instrumental music from the baroque period. Candidates may be required to comment on the relationship between these. In Question 3, candidates will be asked to compare performances, with reference to such matters as tempo, dynamics, instruments, phrasing, articulation, balance, ornamentation, and to comment on relevant performance practice issues.

Section B: Understanding Music (35 marks)

This section will test musical understanding and aural perception in relation to familiar works.

Set Works (2027–2028): The natural world

Ludwig van Beethoven	Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68, *Pastoral*
Maurice Ravel	*Histoires naturelles, M. 50* *Le paon, Le grillon, Le Cygne, Le martin-pêcheur*
Tōru Takemitsu	*Tori wa hoshigata no niwa ni oriru (A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden)*

All set works should be studied in detail.

Candidates are required to answer one essay question from a choice of two. Questions will refer to one or more set works.

Candidates must demonstrate their understanding of how the composers have achieved musical effects in the set works. This may cover features such as use of instrumentation, tonality, texture, tempo, rhythm, harmony and dynamics.

Candidates may be asked to compare compositional techniques and their effects across the set works. Candidates will be required to consider the evidence and make reasoned judgements.

Section C: Connecting Music (30 marks)

This section will test musical and contextual understanding and personal engagement with a wide range of listening. There are no set works. Candidates may not use recordings or scores.

Candidates are required to answer one essay question from a choice of three.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate a wider understanding of contextual and cultural issues, and to make connections. In their answers, candidates must refer to musical examples of **two or more** styles or traditions from folk, pop, jazz and world music. Candidates may also refer to music from the Western classical tradition **not including the set works**.

Candidates are required to answer questions about musical or aesthetic issues. Candidates should be prepared to express reasoned opinions, construct an argument and support their judgements. They need to refer to specific examples from the music they have studied. This should include examples from candidates' wider, personal listening experience and their work in performing and composing. Candidates must also use sufficient examples to fully support their arguments.

Component 2 Practical Music

100 marks

40 per cent (AS Level), 20 per cent (A Level)

This is teacher-assessed and moderated by Cambridge International. There is no question paper for this component.

There are two elements to this component:

- Performing (60 per cent) **and**
- Composing (40 per cent).

Candidates must take both.

Component 2 is marked against the assessment criteria on pages 26–31. Performing is marked out of 60 marks and Composing is marked out of 40 marks.

The following lists the items which must be submitted for each element. Refer to the assessment details below.

Performing	**Composing**
Performance video recording	For each composition: Composition audio recording
List of pieces	For each composition: written statement
Sheet music or supporting documentation	For each composition: notation / written explanation as appropriate to the tradition / detailed account
Cover sheet	Cover sheet
Working mark sheet	Working mark sheet

Element 1 Performing (60 marks)

Candidates perform a selection of **contrasting** music of their choice in a programme of 6 to 10 minutes.

Candidates must present a vocal or instrumental performance. If instrumental, the performance must be on one instrument. The music may be from any tradition(s) appropriate to the instrument. Performances may be solo and/or ensemble, unless the nature of the instrument is such that it is traditionally only played in an ensemble. An audience may be present.

Candidates should select pieces that are technically and musically appropriate for their stage of musicianship. Responsiveness to other performers/parts is also important.

This element requires candidates to show through a vocal or instrumental performance:

- musical understanding, including an awareness of style
- awareness of contrasting pieces, for example different styles, different technical and expressive demands
- expressiveness through technically proficient music making.

The performance must be recorded and assessed by the teacher.

Candidates should submit:

- a video recording
- sheet music.

The performance (video) recording is assessed by the teacher and forwarded with the list of pieces and sheet music to Cambridge International for moderation. Refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* for the year of examination to find examination guidelines and submission dates for examined work and for information on recordings. Also, see Administration for Component 2 on pages 34–35.

Each performance will be marked out of 60 according to the assessment criteria. See pages 28–30.

Element 2 Composing (40 marks)

Candidates must create **two contrasting** compositions in any tradition (Western and/or non-Western) in a style or genre of their choice.

Each composition should be 1–2 minutes long. The combined duration of both compositions should be 2–4 minutes.

Each composition should have a clear sense of purpose, occasion and/or an audience in mind. Each composition should be for two or more voices/instruments. Candidates may use any sound source. This may be an instrument, voice or combination and/or music technology. If music technology sound sources are used, these must be manipulated.

The contrasting nature of the two compositions must enable candidates to demonstrate a range of invention and composing technique.

For each composition, candidates should prepare and submit:

- an audio recording of the composition using:
  - live instruments/voices or
  - music technology or
  - a combination of live and music technology resources
- notation appropriate to the chosen composing tradition **or** a detailed account of the compositional origins and process
- a short written statement of no more than 300 words that:
  - explains the context and purpose of the candidate's intention
  - outlines briefly the creative and musical decisions made, giving relevant listening influences.

The compositions – audio recordings and notated compositions / written explanations / detailed accounts – are assessed by the teacher and forwarded with the written statements to Cambridge International for moderation. Refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* for the year of examination to find examination guidelines and submission dates for examined work and for information on recordings. Also, see Administration for Component 2 on pages 34–35.

Each composition will be marked according to the assessment criteria out of 40. See pages 31–33.

Assessment criteria for Component 2

Guidance on using levels-based mark schemes

Marking of Component 2: Element 1 (Performing) and Element 2 (Composing) should be positive, rewarding achievement where possible but clearly differentiating across the whole range of marks available.

In approaching the assessment process, the marker should look at the work and then make a 'best fit' judgement as to which level statement it fits. In practice the work does not always match one level statement precisely so a judgement may need to be made between two or more level statements.

Once a 'best fit' level statement has been identified the following guide should be used to decide on a specific mark:

- Where the candidate's work **convincingly** meets the level statement, the highest mark should be awarded
- Where the candidate's work **adequately** meets the level statement, the most appropriate mark in the middle of the range should be awarded
- Where the candidate's work **just** meets the level statement, the lowest mark should be awarded.

Element 1 Performing (60 marks)

The performing skills required are described here in four criteria; they are closely related to one another and together allow for an assessment of the whole submission.

A Fluency and accuracy (of pitch and rhythm)

Candidates are credited for:

- the extent to which accurate and fluent performances reflect knowledge and understanding of the music
- fluent performances in improvising traditions, with appropriate use of ideas, avoiding undue hesitation and obvious slips.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• Wholly accurate in notes and rhythms, and completely fluent.	**13–15**
4	• Almost wholly accurate; some slips, but not enough to disturb the basic fluency of the performance.	**10–12**
3	• Accurate in most respects, but with a number of mistakes which disturb the fluency in some parts of the performance.	**7–9**
2	• Some accuracy, but hesitant to the point of impairing the fluency of more than one part of the performance.	**4–6**
1	• Accurate only in parts, with persistent hesitancy, showing little fluency throughout most of the performance.	**1–3**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

B Technical control

Candidates are credited for:

- security of control and the range of skills displayed as appropriate to the instrument/voice presented (for example, intonation, coordination of RH/LH, bow/fingers, tongue/fingers, breath control, diction, quality, variety and evenness of tone, pedalling, registration).

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• Secure technical control in every respect, across a wide range of techniques.	**13–15**
4	• Mainly secure technical control in all significant respects, across a fairly wide range of techniques.	**10–12**
3	• Moderately secure technical control, with minor problems in some areas, across an adequate range of techniques.	**7–9**
2	• Some technical control, with some problems in some areas, across a small range of techniques.	**4–6**
1	• Limited technical control, with problems in many areas, across a basic and limited range of techniques.	**1–3**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

C Realisation of performance markings and/or performance conventions

Candidates are credited for:

- the recognition and realisation of markings written into the score by the composer (for example, phrasing, dynamics, tempo, articulation), and/or
- understanding and application of appropriate performing conventions (for example, ornamentation, notes inégales and other baroque rhythmical alterations; swung quavers and other jazz conventions in Western traditions; other, usually improvisatory, conventions as appropriate to specific non-Western traditions).

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• All markings convincingly realised throughout the performance, and/or all appropriate performing conventions effectively applied.	**13–15**
4	• Most markings convincingly realised throughout the performance, and/or most appropriate performing conventions effectively applied.	**10–12**
3	• Some markings adequately realised in parts of the performance, and/or some appropriate performing conventions applied.	**7–9**
2	• A few markings realised in a few passages, and/or few performing conventions applied.	**4–6**
1	• Very few markings observed, and/or appropriate performing conventions attempted.	**1–3**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

D Interpretation and aural awareness

Candidates are credited for:

- the range of the candidate's understanding of the demands of contrasting pieces, as demonstrated in the selected programme as a whole
- the aural and stylistic awareness needed to maintain consistency of tempo, manage tempo changes, to balance parts or chords, grade dynamics and make effective contrasts, to judge the effect of techniques (for example, use of sustaining pedal, different beaters); and, where appropriate, to shape the performance in relation to an accompaniment or ensemble.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• A well-developed and coherent understanding of the contrasting pieces is communicated in the performance. • Excellent aural and stylistic awareness. • A wholly convincing performance.	**13–15**
4	• A fairly well-developed and coherent understanding of the contrasting pieces is communicated in the performance. • Good aural and stylistic awareness. • A mostly convincing performance.	**10–12**
3	• A moderate understanding of the contrasting pieces is communicated in the performance. • Fairly good aural and stylistic awareness. • A competent performance.	**7–9**
2	• Some understanding of the contrasting pieces is communicated in the performance. • Some aural and stylistic awareness. • A performance which is competent at times, but is inconsistent.	**4–6**
1	• A little understanding of the contrasting pieces is communicated in the performance. • Limited aural and stylistic awareness. • A weak performance.	**1–3**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

Element 2 Composing (40 marks)

The composing skills required are described here in four criteria; they are closely related to one another and together allow for an assessment of the whole submission.

A Preparation; shaping of ideas and structure

Candidates are credited for:

- evidence and outcomes of initial research including critical listening to the music of other composers
- the incorporation of selected techniques and devices into their own personalised composing concept
- shaping distinctive ideas formed from the basic elements of pitch and rhythm, including ideas and textures that are influenced by the selected sound sources
- selecting, using and developing harmonic language in a coherent and convincing way
- balance and pacing of events, using control and informed judgement within a secure structural framework.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• Strong and creative shaping of ideas, showing detailed aural familiarity with a range of relevant listening. • Imaginative and sensitive control of structural events.	**9–10**
4	• Effective and creative shaping of ideas, showing good aural familiarity with a range of relevant listening. • Good effective control of structural events, with some occasional misjudgements.	**7–8**
3	• Reasonable shaping of ideas, although lacking some creativity or character, showing some aural familiarity with relevant listening but perhaps using stock devices from the chosen style. • Reasonable control of structural events, but with over use of features	**5–6**
2	• Ideas show a limited aural familiarity with similar models, but may be awkward in shape. • Some attempt to control the pacing of structural events, with some less satisfactory passages or imbalance.	**3–4**
1	• Weak ideas, with little aural familiarity with relevant listening models. • Weak control of events with an unsatisfactory structural outcome.	**1–2**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

B Working with ideas; the use of compositional techniques

Candidates are credited for:

- working that shows an understanding of how ideas can be refined, combined, developed and extended
- showing judgement in the use of continuity and change or gradual modification/unfolding of ideas to build the music overall.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• Strong and inventive use of techniques to combine, extend and connect materials.	**9–10**
4	• Effective use of techniques, showing familiarity with common conventions, but perhaps lacking imagination or range.	**7–8**
3	• Reasonable attention to a range of techniques of combination, extension and connection, but not always secure in use.	**5–6**
2	• A small range of simple techniques displayed, showing awkwardness in use.	**3–4**
1	• Little attempt to apply any techniques.	**1–2**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

C Use of medium and texture

Candidates are credited for:

- using sound sources with attention to potential technical and expressive range
- using a variety of possible figurations and textures for sound sources alone and in combination
- using medium-specific skill such as text-setting in the use of voice; technology skills in an electro-acoustic context.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• Wholly idiomatic use of medium, with a broad range of inventive and varied textures/figuration.	**9–10**
4	• Effective use of medium, presenting a good range of textures/figuration.	**7–8**
3	• Uses a fair range of workable textures/figuration for the chosen medium, showing some consideration of detail, but perhaps with impracticalities in register/balance or occasional passages of awkward writing.	**5–6**
2	• Uses simple textures/figuration and narrow registers for the chosen medium, but lacking variety.	**3–4**
1	• Some use of the medium and textural/figuration possibilities, but with limited understanding.	**1–2**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

D Communication

The recording and score/detailed notes are of equal weighting.

Candidates are credited for:

- communicating the composing intention using appropriate notation and/or written explanation as appropriate to the chosen tradition or writing of a detailed account of the process of composition
- using music technology or instruments/voices, prioritising expressive communication whilst being alert to accuracy of performance, to record/communicate their compositions.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• A clear and articulate presentation of the score; OR A comprehensive and detailed written account. • The recording communicates a vivid representation of the composer's ideas.	**9–10**
4	• A coherent and playable presentation of the score, but missing some detail for example articulation and phrasing; OR A coherent written account, but missing some information, for example on processes and technological input. • The recording communicates the composer's intention, but is missing some detail.	**7–8**
3	• A mostly accurate presentation of the score, but lacking attention to detail, for example omitted dynamics, poor alignment; OR An adequate written account, but missing information, for example expressive or editing detail. • The recording reasonably communicates the composer's intention, but is lacking attention to detail.	**5–6**
2	• An accurate presentation of the score in layout and pitch, but inaccurate in rhythm and spelling, and missing detail; OR An accurate written account which is a simple description of processes. • The recording communicates the basic elements of the composition.	**3–4**
1	• A sometimes accurate presentation of the score, with incomplete notation in most elements; OR A sometimes accurate written account which is a simple description of processes and may be incomplete. • The recording communicates the basic elements of the composition, but only partially.	**1–2**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

Administration for Component 2

Cover sheets

A cover sheet must be completed and attached to the front of the work of each candidate. The cover sheet, and the instructions for completing it, should be downloaded from the samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples**. The database will ask you for the syllabus code (9483) and your centre number, after which it will take you to the correct form. Follow the instructions on the form itself when completing each form.

Each candidate must have a cover sheet for Element 1 Performing and a cover sheet for Element 2 Composing.

Recording and submitting candidates' marks and work

For information, dates and methods of submission of the coursework marks and sample, please refer to the samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples**

Candidates' marks for Component 2 must be recorded on the Working Mark Sheet produced by Cambridge International. The marks on this form must be identical to the marks you submit to Cambridge International.

The Working Mark Sheet, and the instructions for completing it, should be downloaded each year from the samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples**. The database will ask you for the syllabus code (9483) and your centre number, after which it will take you to the correct form. Follow the instructions on the form itself when completing each form.

See below for sections on Authenticity and Avoidance of plagiarism

Internal moderation

If more than one teacher in your centre is marking internal assessments, you must make arrangements to moderate or standardise your teachers' marking so that all candidates are assessed to a common standard. Further information on the process of internal moderation can be found on the samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples**

The sample you submit to Cambridge International should include examples of the marking of each teacher. You should record the internally moderated marks for all candidates on the Working Mark Sheet and submit these marks to Cambridge International according to the instructions set out in the *Cambridge Handbook*.

Cambridge International will externally moderate all internally assessed components.

- You must submit the marks of all candidates to Cambridge International.
- You must also submit the marked work of a sample of candidates to Cambridge International. The samples database provides details of how the sample will be selected and how it should be submitted. The samples database can be accessed at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples**

External moderators will produce a short report for each centre with feedback on your application of the mark scheme and administration of the assessment.

Authenticity

- It is the centre's responsibility to make sure all coursework is the candidate's original work. Candidates should provide references to any source materials used, listing these at the end of the coursework.
- A general discussion on the progress of coursework is a natural part of the teacher/candidate relationship, as it is for other parts of the course. In addition, if plans and first drafts are completed under teacher supervision, you can be assured of the authenticity of the final coursework.
- You should not mark, correct or edit draft coursework material; candidates can certainly draft and redraft work, but you should only give brief summative comment on progress during this phase.

Avoidance of plagiarism

Candidates should be made aware of the academic conventions governing quotation and reference to the work of others and taught to use them. This should include full reference to the publication, including date, author and page number. If it is a website, the website address and the date the website was accessed should be included.

At the time of submission, the candidate is required to sign a statement stating that the coursework is their own work and you countersign to confirm that you believe the work is that of the candidate. Centres should use the cover sheet for this purpose. Further details can be found in the *Cambridge Handbook*. The cover sheet must appear on or before the title page of the document.

Components 3, 4 and 5

Candidates must choose **two** from:

- Extended Performance
- Extended Composition
- Investigating Music

Components 3, 4 and 5 are marked against the assessment criteria on pages 43–53. Each component is marked out of 100 marks.

The following lists the items which must be submitted for each component. Refer to the assessment details below for further details.

Extended Performance	**Extended Composition**	**Investigating Music**
Performance video recording	Composition audio recording	Essay
List of pieces	–	–
Sheet music or supporting documentation	Notation / written explanation as appropriate to the tradition / detailed account	–
Research report, including relevant audio extracts	Research report, including relevant audio extracts	Reflective statement, including relevant audio extracts
Cover sheet	Cover sheet	Cover sheet

Component 3 Extended Performance

100 marks

25 per cent (A Level)

This is externally assessed by Cambridge International.

Performance

Candidates must perform music on a single instrument or voice that reflects a single focus from any tradition. The focus may be one substantial piece or two or more pieces related by a common theme, style or purpose.

The performance of 15–20 minutes (a short break is permitted for wind players) must take place on a single occasion; an audience may be present at the candidate's discretion. The soloist must perform with any specified accompaniment, ensemble musicians or backing track as appropriate to the chosen repertoire, in order to present an authentic context for a performance.

Candidates should perform on a single instrument. Where two instruments are closely related (for example, descant and treble recorder, trumpet and cornet) music for both may be presented, provided that they both contribute to the focus of the programme.

A research report that explains the preparation and research for the performance must also be submitted for this component.

Research report

All preliminary investigations and unfolding research must be documented as a journal. The journal functions as an organisational tool and provides evidence of the ongoing investigative process throughout the course. Candidates will identify, analyse and compare music to provide a record of the decisions that lead to the choice of the performance programme.

The journal will take the form of an electronic or hard-copy document in which the broad areas of research and more in-depth investigations are documented. Candidates are expected to access a wide range of resources as they prepare for their performance. This may include scores, books, journal articles, online research sources, performer interviews and recordings of performances. Candidates must include full references for every source they mention in their journal. Candidates should also make clear the ways in which they draw upon skills from other areas of the course.

The journal must provide evidence of ongoing reflection and response in the research process.

Using their journal, candidates must prepare a research report of 1000–1500 words. Candidates submit their research report, not the journal.

Candidates must:

- compare two performances of one piece which they have included in their Extended Performance programme. These performances must not be arrangements of the piece.
- analyse the piece, and discuss the issues raised in evaluating the interpretations of other performers
- reflect on how the analysis and evaluation impacted on their own performance
- express independent thinking
- support written comments with carefully selected, relevant audio extracts (not complete performances) from the chosen recordings submitted.

References

Bibliographies and discographies must include full references for every source mentioned in the report. This a compulsory requirement of academic writing and should demonstrate regard for academic conventions.

The bibliographies should document **all** research sources, for example, references, scores/transcriptions, programme notes, sleeve notes, internet sources, recordings and interviews.

Bibliographies and discographies do **not** count towards the word limit.

Assessment details

Candidates must include the following items in their final submission:

- the list of pieces performed in their programme
- sheet music or supporting documentation appropriate to the chosen performance style or tradition
- a video recording of the final performance in which the candidate is clearly identifiable
- research report:
  - a 1000–1500-word report
  - reference details for all sources (bibliography and discography)
  - recorded extracts (with a clear track list)
- a statement from the teacher testifying that the submission:
  - is the candidate's own work
  - has not been used for any other examination submission
  - details any assistance given during consultations.

Refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* for the year of examination to find examination guidelines and submission dates for examined work and for information on recordings. Also, see Administration for Components 3, 4 and 5 on pages 53–54.

Each extended performance will be marked out of 100 according to the assessment criteria. See pages 43–45.

Component 4 Extended Composition

100 marks

25 per cent (A Level)

This is externally assessed by Cambridge International.

Composition

Candidates must compose a single composition, which may comprise of parts, lasting 6–8 minutes.

The composition may draw on, or be a fusion of, any traditions or styles and should be notated appropriately. If the style/tradition cannot be notated precisely, a full account of the composition and recording processes must be provided.

Candidates may use any sound source. This may be an instrument, voice or combination and/or music technology. If music technology sound sources are used, these must be manipulated.

A research report that explains the preparation and research for the composition must also be submitted for this component.

Research report

All preliminary investigations and unfolding research must be documented as a journal. The journal functions as an organisational tool and provides evidence of the ongoing investigative process throughout the course. Candidates will identify, analyse and compare music to provide a record of the decisions that guided the forming, and ongoing progress, of the composing concept.

The journal will take the form of an electronic or hard-copy document in which the broad areas of research and more in-depth investigations are documented. Candidates are expected to access a wide range of resources as they prepare their composition. This may include scores, books, journal articles, online research sources, composer interviews and relevant listening. Candidates must include full references for every source they mention in their journal. Candidates should also make clear the ways in which they draw upon skills from other areas of the course.

The journal must provide evidence of ongoing reflection and response in the research process.

Using their journal, candidates must prepare a research report of 1000–1500 words. Candidates submit their research report, not the journal.

Candidates must:

- listen critically to and analyse the music of relevant composers, identifying a range of ideas, techniques and stylistic features, expressing a reflective response to the research
- express an understanding of the relationship between the composing of others and how this impacted on the candidate's own composing
- explain the context and purpose of their composing
- provide a reflective account of the creative and technical decision-making process
- express independent thinking
- support written comments with notated extracts of the work of others and/or carefully selected, relevant audio extracts from a range of research listening, to be submitted on a recording with a clear track list.

References

Bibliographies and discographies must include full references for every source mentioned in the report. This a compulsory requirement of academic writing and should demonstrate regard for academic conventions.

The bibliographies should document **all** research sources, for example, references, scores/transcriptions, programme notes, sleeve notes, internet sources, recordings and interviews.

Bibliographies and discographies do **not** count towards the word limit.

Assessment details

Candidates must include the following items in their final submission:

- notation appropriate to the chosen composing tradition **or** a detailed account of the compositional process
- an audio recording of the composition using:
  - live instruments/voices or
  - music technology or
  - a combination of live and music technology resources
- research report:
  - a 1000–1500-word report
  - reference details for all sources (bibliography and discography)
  - recorded extracts (with a clear track list)
- a statement from the teacher testifying that the submission:
  - is the candidate's own work
  - has not been used for any other examination submission
  - details any assistance given during consultations.

Refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* for the year of examination to find examination guidelines and submission dates for examined work and for information on recordings. Also, see syllabus section Administration for Components 3, 4 and 5 on pages 53–54.

Each extended composition will be marked out of 100 according to the assessment criteria. See pages 46–49.

Component 5 Investigating Music

100 marks

25 per cent (A Level)

This is externally assessed by Cambridge International.

Essay

The starting point is music of interest to the candidates. The title of the essay should be evaluative (for example, phrased as a question). Candidates must write in response to contextualised listening.

The writing should be presented as an essay of 2500–3000 words.

Although the essay must be 2500–3000 words, it need not be entirely in connected prose. For example, detailed listening notes may document part of the candidate's findings. A word count must be given.

The music studied may be drawn from any tradition. Candidates might choose, for example, to study aspects of: the repertoire of an instrument, national characteristics, a genre, a composer or performer. The primary mode of investigation must be detailed and contextualised listening, to one or more pieces of music.

The focus of the essay must be on the music. In addition to careful listening, an appropriate amount of reading to support contextual understanding will also be essential. Candidates must evaluate their sources of information – musical and written, including written notation where appropriate. They need to analyse, and make connections and informed judgements. Candidates should write with an interested and musically knowledgeable audience in mind.

Candidates must listen critically to and analyse music relevant to the essay, identifying the context and focus, expressing a reflective response to the research topic. They must be able to recognise and select what is significant, using examples. They should use a range of research to understand contexts and analytic and/or investigative techniques and be able to communicate their methods and findings. In their essay, candidates should use technical vocabulary, make judgements, using examples, and express independent thinking.

Candidates must support written comments with notated extracts of the work of others and/or carefully selected, relevant audio extracts from a range of research listening, to be submitted on a recording with a clear track list.

Candidates may draw on listening, composing and performing from elsewhere in the course, but the focus of Investigating Music **must** be different and **must** draw on different pieces. Candidates are required to choose a further body of music drawn from repertoire **not** represented or studied in any other component as a single focus for detailed study. For example, a candidate who chooses Extended Performing must not submit an analysis of one of the pieces in their programme, whether or not they wrote about it in their report.

In addition, if the focus is on an aspect of Western music, it should not draw from the set works listed for the Listening paper.

A reflective statement that explains the preparation and research for the essay must also be submitted for this component.

Reflective statement

All preliminary investigations and unfolding research must be documented as a journal. The journal functions as an organisational tool and provides evidence of the ongoing investigative process throughout the course. Candidates will identify, analyse and compare music to provide a record of the decisions that guided the forming, and ongoing progress, of the essay concept.

The journal will take the form of an electronic or hard-copy document in which the broad areas of research and more in-depth investigations are documented. Candidates are expected to access a wide range of resources as they prepare their essay. This may include scores, books, journal articles, online research sources, interviews and relevant listening. Candidates must include full references for every source they mention in their journal. Candidates should also make clear the ways in which they draw upon skills from other areas of the course.

The journal must provide evidence of ongoing reflection and response in the research process.

Using their journal, candidates must prepare a reflective statement of up to 500 words. Candidates submit their reflective statement, not the journal.

Candidates must:

- write a brief reflection (of up to 500 words) on the process of research and listening
- include reference to pieces and sources that may not have made it into the final essay and why
- express independent thinking.

References

Bibliographies and discographies must include full references for every source mentioned in the reflective statement and in the essay. This a compulsory requirement of the academic writing and should demonstrate regard for academic conventions.

The bibliographies should document **all** research sources, for example, references, scores/transcriptions, programme notes, sleeve notes, internet sources, recordings and interviews.

Bibliographies and discographies do **not** count towards the word limit.

Assessment details

Candidates must include the following items in their final submission:

- reflective statement:
  - a statement of up to 500 words
  - where used, reference details for all sources (for example, bibliography, discography, score extracts)
- essay:
  - an essay of 2500–3000 words
  - reference details for all sources (bibliography and discography)
  - recorded extracts (with a clear track list)
  - score extracts (either in text or in full scores in appendices)
- a statement from the teacher testifying that the submission:
  - is the candidate's own work
  - has not been used for any other examination submission
  - details any assistance given during consultations.

Refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* for the year of examination to find examination guidelines and submission dates for examined work and for information on recordings. Also, see Administration for Components 3, 4 and 5 on pages 53–54.

Each essay will be marked out of 100 according to the assessment criteria. See pages 50–53.

Assessment criteria for Components 3, 4 and 5

Components 3, 4 and 5 will be marked using the criteria below.

Component 3 Extended Performance (100 marks)

The performing skills required are described here in relation to five criteria; they are closely related to one another and together allow for an assessment of the whole submission.

A Research report

Candidates are credited for:

- organising their research into a detailed, coherent and reflective report
- acknowledging influences on their research, and analysing the importance of these influences
- demonstrating their thinking about the development of the performance programme
- documenting their report carefully with relevant sources, including any other contextual material.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• The report is fully detailed, coherent and reflective. • Influences and sources are identified, and the sustained analysis is relevant, appropriate and effective.	**17–20**
4	• The report is well detailed, coherent and reflective. • Influences and sources are identified, and the analysis is relevant, mostly appropriate and effective.	**13–16**
3	• The report is reasonably detailed, coherent and reflective. • Influences and sources are identified, and the analysis is often relevant.	**9–12**
2	• The report evidences some reflection, although details may be lacking and the thinking is sometimes unclear. • Influences and sources are sometimes identified, with some relevant analysis.	**5–8**
1	• The report evidences limited or very basic reflection, and the thinking is often unclear. • Influences and sources may occasionally be identified, but there is little, if any, analysis.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

B Fluency and accuracy (of pitch and rhythm)

Candidates are credited for:

- performing with accuracy in their interpretation of the technical and expressive aspects of the music programme
- performing with fluency and confidence.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• Wholly accurate in notes and rhythms, and completely fluent.	**17–20**
4	• Almost wholly accurate; some slips, but not enough to disturb the basic fluency of the performance.	**13–16**
3	• Accurate in most respects, but with a number of mistakes which disturb the fluency in some parts of the performance.	**9–12**
2	• Some accuracy, but hesitant to the point of impairing the fluency of more than one part of the performance.	**5–8**
1	• Accurate only in parts, with persistent hesitancy, showing little fluency throughout most of the performance.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

C Technical control

Candidates are credited for:

- performing with technical control across a range of technical skills

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• Secure technical control in every respect, across a wide range of techniques.	**17–20**
4	• Mainly secure technical control in all significant respects, across a fairly wide range of techniques.	**13–16**
3	• Moderately secure technical control, with minor problems in some areas, across an adequate range of techniques.	**9–12**
2	• Some technical control, with some problems in some areas, across a small range of techniques.	**5–8**
1	• Limited technical control, with problems in many areas, across a limited range of techniques.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

D Realisation of performance markings and/or performance conventions

Candidates are credited for:

- performing with contextual understanding of conventions within the chosen performing focus.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• All markings well realised throughout the performance, and/or all appropriate performing conventions effectively applied.	**17–20**
4	• Most markings well realised throughout the performance, and/or most appropriate performing conventions effectively applied.	**13–16**
3	• Some markings adequately realised in parts of the performance, and/or some appropriate performing conventions applied.	**9–12**
2	• A few markings realised in a few passages, and/or few performing conventions applied.	**5–8**
1	• Very few markings observed, and/or appropriate performing conventions attempted.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

E Interpretation and aural awareness

Candidates are credited for:

- making interpretative connections between research elements and performing outcomes
- displaying appropriate aural awareness
- performing with understanding.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• A well-developed and coherent interpretation, with excellent aural and stylistic awareness. • A wholly convincing performance.	**17–20**
4	• A fairly well-developed and coherent interpretation, with good aural and stylistic awareness. • A mostly convincing performance.	**13–16**
3	• A moderate interpretative understanding, with fairly good aural and stylistic awareness. • A competent performance.	**9–12**
2	• Some interpretative understanding, with some aural and stylistic awareness. • A performance which is competent at times, but is inconsistent.	**5–8**
1	• A little interpretative understanding in a few parts of the performance, with limited aural and stylistic awareness. • A weak performance.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

Component 4 Extended Composition (100 marks)

The composing skills required are described here in relation to five criteria; they are closely related to one another and together allow for an assessment of the whole submission.

A Research report

Candidates are credited for:

- organising their research into a detailed, coherent and reflective report
- acknowledging influences on their research, and analysing the importance of these influences
- demonstrating their thinking about the development of the composition
- documenting their report carefully with relevant sources, including any other contextual material.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• The report is fully detailed, coherent and reflective. • Influences and sources are identified, and the sustained analysis is relevant, appropriate and effective.	**17–20**
4	• The report is well detailed, coherent and reflective. • Influences and sources are identified, and the analysis is relevant, mostly appropriate and effective.	**13–16**
3	• The report is reasonably detailed, coherent and reflective. • Influences and sources are identified, and the analysis is often relevant.	**9–12**
2	• The report evidences some reflection, although details may be lacking and the thinking is sometimes unclear. • Influences and sources are sometimes identified, with some relevant analysis.	**5–8**
1	• The report evidences limited or very basic reflection, and the thinking is often unclear. • Influences and sources may occasionally be identified, but there is little, if any, analysis.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

B Shaping of ideas; structure

Candidates are credited for:

- shaping distinctive ideas formed from the basic elements of pitch and rhythm, including ideas and textures that are influenced by the selected sound sources
- selecting, using and developing harmonic language in a coherent and convincing way
- balance and pacing of events, using control and informed judgement within a secure structural framework to meet the demands of an extended composition.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• Strong and creative shaping of ideas, showing detailed aural familiarity with relevant listening. • Imaginative and sensitive control of structural events.	**17–20**
4	• Effective and creative shaping of ideas, showing good aural familiarity with relevant listening. • Good, effective control of structural events, with some occasional misjudgements.	**13–16**
3	• Reasonable shaping of ideas although lacking some creativity or character, showing some aural familiarity with a range of relevant listening but perhaps using stock devices from the chosen style. • Reasonable control of structural events, but with over use of features.	**9–12**
2	• Ideas show a limited aural familiarity with similar models, but may be awkward in shape. • Some attempt to control the pacing of structural events, with some less satisfactory passages or imbalance.	**5–8**
1	• Weak ideas, with little aural familiarity with relevant listening models. • Weak control of events, with an unsatisfactory structural outcome.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

C Working with ideas; the use of compositional techniques

Candidates are credited for:

- working that shows an understanding of how ideas can be refined, combined, developed and extended
- showing judgement in the use of continuity and change or gradual modification/unfolding of ideas to build the music overall.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• Strong use of techniques to combine, develop and extend materials and to refine these, imaginatively.	**17–20**
4	• Good effective use of techniques to combine, develop and extend materials, showing familiarity with common conventions, but perhaps lacking imagination or range.	**13–16**
3	• Reasonable attention to a range of techniques to combine, develop and extend materials, but not always secure in use.	**9–12**
2	• Some attention to a range of simple techniques displayed, showing awkwardness in use.	**5–8**
1	• Little attempt to apply any techniques.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

D Use of medium and texture

Candidates are credited for:

- using sound sources with attention to potential technical and expressive range
- using a variety of possible figurations and textures for sound sources alone and in combination
- using medium-specific skill such as text-setting in the use of voice; technology skills in an electro-acoustic context.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• Wholly idiomatic use of medium, with a broad range of inventive and varied textures/figuration.	**17–20**
4	• Effective use of medium, presenting a good range of textures/figuration.	**13–16**
3	• Uses a fair range of workable textures/figuration for the chosen medium, showing some consideration of detail, but perhaps with impracticalities in register/balance or occasional passages of awkward writing.	**9–12**
2	• Uses simple textures/figuration and narrow registers for the chosen medium, but lacking variety.	**5–8**
1	• Some use of the medium and textural/figuration possibilities, but with limited understanding.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

E Communication

The recording and score/detailed notes are of equal weighting.

Candidates are credited for:

- communicating the composing intention using appropriate notation and/or written explanation as appropriate to the chosen tradition or writing of a detailed account of the process of composition
- using music technology or instruments/voices, prioritising expressive communication whilst being alert to accuracy of performance, to record/communicate their compositions.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• A clear and articulate presentation of the score; OR A comprehensive and detailed written account. • The recording communicates a vivid representation of the composer's ideas.	**17–20**
4	• A coherent and playable presentation of the score, but missing some detail, for example articulation and phrasing; OR A coherent written account, but missing some information, for example on processes and technological input. • The recording communicates the composer's intention, but is missing some detail.	**13–16**
3	• A mostly accurate presentation of the score, but lacking attention to detail, for example omitted dynamics, poor alignment; OR An adequate written account, but missing information, for example expressive or editing detail. • The recording reasonably communicates the composer's intention, but is lacking attention to detail.	**9–12**
2	• An accurate presentation of the score in layout and pitch, but inaccurate in rhythm and spelling, and missing detail; OR An accurate written account which is a simple description of processes. • The recording communicates the basic elements of the composition.	**5–8**
1	• A sometimes accurate presentation of the score, with incomplete notation in most elements; OR A sometimes accurate written account which is a simple description of processes and may be incomplete. • The recording communicates the basic elements of the composition, but only partially.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

Component 5 Investigating Music (100 marks)

The investigative skills required are described here in relation to five criteria; they are closely related to one another and together allow for an assessment of the whole submission.

A Reflective statement

Candidates are credited for:

- a reflective summary of the process of research and listening
- acknowledging influences on their research
- documenting their statement carefully with relevant sources, including any other contextual material.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• The statement is reflective and coherent. • Influences and sources are identified, and the sustained analysis is relevant, appropriate and effective.	**17–20**
4	• The statement is mostly reflective and coherent. • Influences and sources are identified, and the analysis is relevant, mostly appropriate and effective.	**13–16**
3	• The statement is reasonably reflective and coherent. • Influences and sources are identified, and the analysis is often relevant.	**9–12**
2	• The statement evidences some reflection, although the thinking is sometimes unclear. • Influences and sources are sometimes identified, with some relevant analysis.	**5–8**
1	• The statement evidences limited or very basic reflection, and the thinking is often unclear. • Influences and sources may occasionally be identified, but there is little, if any, analysis.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

B Listening

Candidates are credited for:

- aural perception
- recognising and selecting what is significant
- supporting recorded extracts.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• Well-developed level of aural discrimination. • Well-judged focus on significant features. • Evidence of an excellent range of appropriate listening.	**17–20**
4	• Fairly well-developed level of aural discrimination. • An apt focus on significant features. • Evidence of a wide range of appropriate listening.	**13–16**
3	• An adequate level of aural discrimination. • A consistent focus on significant features. • Evidence of a fairly wide range of appropriate listening.	**9–12**
2	• Some evidence of aural awareness. • Some recognition of significant features. • Evidence of a small range of appropriate listening.	**5–8**
1	• An insecure aural response. • Little awareness of significant features. • Little evidence of appropriate listening.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

C Contextual understanding

Candidates are credited for:

- using a range of reference material
- understanding relevant context
- documenting their essay carefully with relevant sources, including any other contextual material.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• A comprehensive and pertinent range of academic reading/research informs an excellent understanding of significant contextual matters.	**17–20**
4	• A comprehensive range of mostly academic reading/research informs knowledgeable references to relevant contextual matters.	**13–16**
3	• A fairly wide range of appropriate reading/research, of variable academic standard, drawn on to sketch a helpful, relevant context.	**9–12**
2	• Some evidence of reading/research undertaken, including some academic sources, leads to partial understanding of relevant background.	**5–8**
1	• A limited amount of reading/research undertaken, including some academic sources. Some attempt is made to establish background, but is of only partial relevance.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

D Analytic/investigative techniques and technical vocabulary

Candidates are credited for:

- using appropriate analytic and/or investigative techniques
- expressing findings using appropriate technical vocabulary.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• Strong application of wholly appropriate analytic/investigative techniques, explained precisely and clearly, using wholly-correct technical language.	**17–20**
4	• Mostly effective application of appropriate analytic/investigative techniques, explained clearly, using accurate technical language.	**13–16**
3	• Reasonable application of appropriate analytic/investigative techniques, explained using mostly correct technical language.	**9–12**
2	• Some attempt to investigate relevant aspects, only partly supported by necessary technical language.	**5–8**
1	• Weak attempt to investigate relevant features of the music, hampered by an insecure grasp of terminology.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

E Communication and substantiation of judgements

Candidates are credited for:

- communicating methods and findings cogently
- making independent judgements supported by reference to apt examples.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	• A thoroughly coherent essay. • All judgements substantiated by wholly apt, telling examples, chosen independently of other commentators.	**17–20**
4	• A coherent essay. • Nearly all judgements substantiated by entirely appropriate, clearly identified and appropriate examples, many chosen independently of other commentators.	**13–16**
3	• A mostly coherent essay. • Most judgements supported by appropriate examples, some derived from other commentators, with acknowledgement.	**9–12**
2	• An inconsistent essay. • Some judgements illustrated by examples, but relying on other commentators, with acknowledgment.	**5–8**
1	• A weak essay. • Few judgements, but some illustrated by examples, with acknowledgment.	**1–4**
0	• No creditable content.	**0**

Administration for Components 3, 4 and 5

Cover sheets

A cover sheet must be completed and attached to the front of the work of each candidate. The cover sheet, and the instructions for completing it, should be downloaded from the samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples**. The database will ask you for the syllabus code (9483) and your centre number, after which it will take you to the correct form. Follow the instructions on the form itself when completing each form.

Each candidate must have a separate cover sheet for each component they choose to study: two from Component 3 Extended Performance, Component 4 Extended Composition and Component 5 Investigating Music.

Authenticity

- It is the centre's responsibility to make sure all coursework is the candidate's original work. Candidates should provide references to any source materials used, listing these at the end of the coursework.
- A general discussion on the progress of coursework is a natural part of the teacher/candidate relationship, as it is for other parts of the course. In addition, if plans and first drafts are completed under teacher supervision, you can be assured of the authenticity of the final coursework.
- You should not mark, correct or edit draft coursework material; candidates can certainly draft and redraft work, but you should only give brief summative comment on progress during this phase.

Avoidance of plagiarism

Candidates should be made aware of the academic conventions governing quotation and reference to the work of others and taught to use them. This should include full reference to the publication, including date, author and page number. If it is a website, the website address and the date the website was accessed should be included.

At the time of submission, the candidate is required to sign a statement stating that the coursework is their own work and you countersign to confirm that you believe the work is that of the candidate. Centres should use the cover sheet for this purpose. Further details can be found in the *Cambridge Handbook*. The cover sheet must appear on or before the title page of the document.

Command words

Command words and their meanings help candidates know what is expected from them in the exams. The table below includes command words used in the assessment for this syllabus. The use of the command word will relate to the subject context.

Command word	What it means
Analyse	examine in detail to show meaning, identify elements and the relationship between them
Assess	make an informed judgement
Comment	give an informed opinion
Compare	identify/comment on similarities and/or differences
Consider	review and respond to given information
Contrast	identify/comment on differences
Define	give precise meaning
Demonstrate	show how or give an example
Describe	state the points of a topic / give characteristics and main features
Develop	take forward to a more advanced stage or build upon given information
Discuss	write about issue(s) or topic(s) in depth in a structured way
Evaluate	judge or calculate the quality, importance, amount, or value of something
Examine	investigate closely, in detail
Explain	set out purposes or reasons / make the relationships between things clear / say why and/or how and support with relevant evidence
Give	produce an answer from a given source or recall/memory
Identify	name/select/recognise
Justify	support a case with evidence/argument
Outline	set out the main points
State	express in clear terms
Suggest	apply knowledge and understanding to situations where there are a range of valid responses in order to make proposals / put forward considerations
Summarise	select and present the main points, without detail

Phrases such as ‘How far do you agree ...?’ and ‘To what extent ...?’ may also be seen in the assessment for this syllabus.

5 What else you need to know

This section is an overview of other information you need to know about this syllabus. It will help to share the administrative information with your exams officer so they know when you will need their support. Find more information about our administrative processes at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

Before you start

Previous study

We recommend that learners starting this course should have completed a course in Music equivalent to Cambridge IGCSE™ or Cambridge O Level.

Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge International AS & A Level syllabuses to require about 180 guided learning hours for each Cambridge International AS Level and about 360 guided learning hours for a Cambridge International A Level. The number of hours a learner needs to achieve the qualification may vary according to each school and the learners' previous experience of the subject.

Availability and timetables

All Cambridge schools are allocated to one of six administrative zones. Each zone has a specific timetable. Find your administrative zone at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/adminzone**

You can view the timetable for your administrative zone at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables**

You can enter candidates in the June and November exam series.

Check you are using the syllabus for the year the candidate is taking the exam.

Private candidates can enter for this syllabus. For more information, please refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*.

Combining with other syllabuses

Candidates can take this syllabus alongside other syllabuses in a single exam series. The only exceptions are:

- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Group awards: Cambridge AICE Diploma

Cambridge AICE Diploma (Advanced International Certificate of Education) is a group award for Cambridge International AS & A Level. It encourages schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of learners who pass exams in a range of different subjects.

Learn more about Cambridge AICE Diploma at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/aice**

Making entries

Exams officers are responsible for submitting entries. We encourage them to work closely with you to make sure they enter the right number of candidates for the right combination of syllabus components. Entry option codes and instructions for submitting entries are in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*. Your exams officer has access to this guide.

Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as administrative zones. We allocate all Cambridge schools to an administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable.

Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

Support for exams officers

We know how important exams officers are to the successful running of exams. We provide them with the support they need to make entries on time. Your exams officer will find this support, and guidance for all other phases of the Cambridge Exams Cycle, at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

Retakes and carrying forward marks

Candidates can retake Cambridge International AS Level and Cambridge International A Level as many times as they want to. Information on retake entries is at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/retakes**

Candidates can carry forward their Cambridge International AS Level marks from one series to complete their Cambridge International A Level in a following series. The rules, time limits and regulations for carry-forward entries can be found in the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment and the *Carry-forward regulations supplement* at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

Candidates cannot resubmit, in whole or in part, coursework from a previous series for re-marking. For information, refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

Marks achieved in 9483, Component 2 Practical Music can be carried forward on their own to future series, subject to the requirements set out in the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment and the *Carry-forward regulations supplement* at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

Marks achieved in 9483, Component 2 Practical Music can be carried forward to complete an AS Level or an A Level. This is only allowed if:

- all other components of the AS Level (9483 Paper 1 Listening) are taken in the series that the candidate completes their AS Level

or

- all other components of the A Level (9483 Paper 1 Listening and two of 9483 components 03 Extended Performance, 04 Extended Composition and 05 Investigating Music) are taken in the series that the candidate completes their A Level.

An AS Level which consists of component 9483 Paper 1 Listening which was taken in one series, e.g. November 2025, and coursework 9483, Component 2 Practical Music which was submitted in an earlier series, e.g. June 2025, cannot be carried forward to complete an A Level in a future series.

For information, refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment and the *Carry-forward regulations supplement* at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

To confirm what entry options are available for this syllabus, refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries* for the relevant series.

Language

This syllabus and the related assessment materials are available in English only.

Accessibility and equality

Syllabus and assessment design

At Cambridge we recognise that our candidates have highly diverse socio-economic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and may also have a variety of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics include special educational needs and disability (SEND), religion and belief, and characteristics related to gender and identity.

We follow accessible design principles to make our syllabuses and assessment materials as accessible and inclusive as possible. We review language accessibility, visual resources, question layout and the contexts used in questions. Using this approach means that we give all candidates the fairest possible opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding.

Access arrangements

Our design principles aim to make sure our assessment materials are accessible for all candidates. To further minimise barriers faced by candidates with SEND, illness or injury, we offer a range of access arrangements and modified papers. This is the principal way in which we comply with our duty to make 'reasonable adjustments', as guided by the UK Equality Act 2010.

Important:

Requested access arrangements should be based on evidence of the candidate's barrier to taking an assessment and should also reflect their normal way of working. This is explained in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

- For Cambridge to approve an access arrangement, we need to agree that it constitutes a reasonable adjustment and does not affect the security or integrity of the assessment.
- Details of our standard access arrangements and modified question papers are available in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**
- Centres are expected to check the availability of access arrangements and modified question papers at the start of the course. All applications should be made by the deadlines published in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**
- Contact us at the start of the course to find out if we can approve an access arrangement that is not included in the list of standard access arrangements.
- Candidates who cannot access parts of the assessment may be able to receive an award based on the parts they have completed.

After the exam

Grading and reporting

Grades a, b, c, d or e indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge International AS Level. 'a' is the highest and 'e' is the lowest grade.

Grades A*, A, B, C, D or E indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge International A Level. A* is the highest and E is the lowest grade.

'Ungraded' means that the candidate's performance did not meet the standard required for the lowest grade (E or e). 'Ungraded' is reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. In specific circumstances your candidates may see one of the following letters on their statement of results:

- Q (PENDING)
- X (NO RESULT).

These letters do not appear on the certificate.

If a candidate takes a Cambridge International A Level and fails to achieve grade E or higher, a Cambridge International AS Level grade will be awarded if both of the following apply:

- the components taken for the Cambridge International A Level by the candidate in that series included all the components making up a Cambridge International AS Level
- the candidate's performance on the AS Level components was sufficient to merit the award of a Cambridge International AS Level grade.

On the statement of results, Cambridge International AS & A Levels are shown as General Certificates of Education Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level, GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level (GCE AS Level) and GCE Advanced Level (GCE A Level).

On the certificates, Cambridge International AS & A Levels are shown as General Certificate of Education.

School feedback: 'Cambridge International A Levels are the 'gold standard' qualification. They are based on rigorous, academic syllabuses that are accessible to students from a wide range of abilities yet have the capacity to stretch our most able.'

Feedback from: Director of Studies, Auckland Grammar School, New Zealand

How students, teachers and higher education can use the grades

Cambridge International A Level

Assessment at Cambridge International A Level has two purposes:

1 to measure learning and achievement

The assessment confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus.

2 to show likely future success

The outcomes help predict which students are well prepared for a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful.

The outcomes help students choose the most suitable course or career

Cambridge International AS Level

Assessment at Cambridge International AS Level has two purposes:

1 to measure learning and achievement

The assessment confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus.

2 to show likely future success

The outcomes help predict which students are well prepared for a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful.

The outcomes help students choose the most suitable course or career

The outcomes help decide whether students part way through a Cambridge International A Level course are making enough progress to continue

The outcomes guide teaching and learning in the next stages of the Cambridge International A Level course.

Changes to this syllabus for 2027 and 2028

The syllabus has been updated. This is version 2, published September 2025.

You must read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme. We review our syllabuses regularly to make sure they continue to meet the needs of our schools. In updating this syllabus, we have made it easier for teachers and students to understand, keeping the familiar features that teachers and schools value.

Changes to version 2 of the syllabus, published September 2025

Other changes	• Typographical errors have been corrected. – *Cygnet* was corrected to *Cygne* on pages 15 and 25..

Changes to version 1 of the syllabus, published September 2024

Changes to syllabus content	• The set works for this syllabus have been updated.

Significant changes to the syllabus are indicated by black vertical lines either side of the text.

Syllabuses and specimen materials represent the final authority on the content and structure of all of our assessments.

With a Customer Services team available 24 hours a day, 6 days a week, and dedicated regional teams supporting schools in 160 countries, we understand your local context and are here to guide you so you can provide your learners with everything they need to prepare for Cambridge International AS & A Level.

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School feedback: ‘While studying Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International A Levels, students broaden their horizons through a global perspective and develop a lasting passion for learning.’

Feedback from: Zhai Xiaoning, Deputy Principal, The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China

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